



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

ALEX PENELAS
MAYOR

May 14, 2003

Honorable Ann Veneman
Secretary of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Room 200 A
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Madam Secretary,

I take this opportunity to write in support of the "country-of-origin" labeling law for agricultural goods. Florida has had a similar law covering fruits and vegetables since 1979. Over the years, the monitoring and enforcing of that law has been very successful. I am of the belief that a similar national law that provides labeling requirements for fruits and vegetables, as well as meats and fish, will also be successful and will gain strong support from consumers.

Public concern about bio-terrorism and tainted food products are another reason to move forward with this labeling law. Consumers want to know where their food comes from so that they can make informed decisions about its quality and safety. A recent study by researchers at the University of Florida determined that the implementation of this law would not be cost prohibitive.

This law is smart for consumers and good for America's farm community. In addition, 25 Florida based agricultural groups, including the Dade County Farm Bureau, support "country-of-origin" labeling.

I respectfully request your support of this sound agricultural policy and ask that you consider continuing to move forward with "country-of-origin" labeling for agricultural goods.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Penelas", is written over a horizontal line.

Alex Penelas
Mayor



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